



Trades Credential - Frequently Asked Questions

All Trades Credentials

- **How do I obtain a DSPS Trades credential?**
 - Identify which credential you need (reference [Wis. Admin. Code § SPS 305](#) if needed), [click here](#) and select the profession. Print your application from the “Application Form” link, and send the completed application and any additional required documentation to: WI DSPS, Trades Credential Unit, P.O. Box 78780, Milwaukee, WI 53293-0780.
 - **Note:** The Department will not determine which specific license you need to obtain. Credential holders are responsible for their own professional practice and for compliance with the law. The Department is unable to answer questions regarding:
 - Potential or ongoing litigation
 - Billing issues
 - Business advice
 - Employer/employee disputes
 - Legal opinions
 - Professional judgment or discretion
 - The Department website provides a wide range of materials to assist credential holders, as well as the public, in answering questions about the practice of the various professions. These materials include the relevant Wisconsin Statutes, Wisconsin Administrative Code, formal disciplinary orders, meeting minutes, and frequently asked practice questions (position statements) developed for many of the professions. The address for the department website is: www.dps.wi.gov.
- **What is the DSPS office location and hours?**
 - We are located at 1400 East Washington Ave, Madison, WI 53703 and are open Monday through Friday, 7:45 am to 4:30 pm.
- **How can I update my address?**
 - You may email the Department at DSPPCredTrades@wi.gov or call us at (608) 266-2112 to update your address. You will need your credential/customer ID number and the last four digits of your social security number or federal ID number. You are not able to update your Trades license address online except at the time of your license renewal.
- **Can I overnight my application for faster processing?**
 - No. Applications are processed in the order they are received. The only way to expedite the processing of your application is to come in person to our Madison office. If you’ve mailed your application, please allow 21 days for processing before contacting DSPS about the status of your application.

- **How do I file a complaint against a tradesperson?**
 - Complaints must be filed by completing the online complaint process, or by filing a complaint in writing. Click [here](#) to begin the online complaint process. Please note that we cannot process complaints over the phone. Contact your municipal inspection department before filing a complaint with the state.
To check on the status of a complaint you have filed, or for questions regarding how the DSPS complaint process works, please call (608) 261-4490.
- **Can I pay for my credential over the phone?**
 - No. We cannot take payments over the phone. You may complete our [fax payment form](#).
Note: using the credit card authorization form will not expedite your credential processing. Your application will be processed in the order it was received.
 - If you need to expedite your payment for an initial application or renewal and are not able to do so online, you may come to our Madison office to immediately process your payment in person.
- **How long does it take for applications to be processed?**
 - Please allow up to 21 calendar days for your application to be processed from the date the application is received. All applications are processed in the order they are received. The only way to expedite the application process is to come to our Madison office, where we are able to process your application while you wait.

Exam/CE Questions:

- **I am taking an upcoming state Trades licensure exam. What am I allowed to bring with me?**
 - The Trades exams are open book. You may bring any code books, handbooks, hand-written notes, or any other printed material. You may bring a basic calculator, but not one that has the capability to store formulas. You cannot bring scratch paper or utilize any type of device that allows access to the internet during the exam, including cell phones.
- **How will I find out the results of my exam?**
 - Per the [Wisconsin Administrative Code](#), exam results are mailed within 21 days of the exam date. Exam results cannot be given over the phone or via email.
- **How do I know if a course is approved for continuing education for my license?**
 - Ask the course provider to verify that the course has been approved by the Department. In order for the course to count towards your continuing education requirement, it needs to be pre-approved by the Department prior to the date you complete it. Click [here](#) for a list of approved courses, organized by credential type.
- **How do I check on the status of my credential or my continuing education hours?**
 - Click [here](#) for the License Look-Up page. Next, click on “Trades Credential/License Search” and enter your credential ID or license number. If you do not know your ID number, click on “Trades Credential/License Advanced Search” to search by last or business name. When your name appears, click on your name to bring up your Continuing Education Units (CEU) balance. Click on the license type to generate a list of courses that you have already completed. If the hours listed appear incorrect, contact the course provider to update your attendance.
- **I am a course provider and need to update or renew my course details. Who should I contact?**
 - Please contact the Office of Education and Examinations by emailing sbcourseapproval@wisconsin.gov or call 608-261-0357.

Renewal Questions:

- **How do I renew my credential online?**
 - Click [here](#) to renew credentials online. Please note that some credentials cannot be renewed online, such as blasters, welders, apprentices, and some elevator credentials due to additional requirements of those credentials.
- **I am renewing online and am being asked for a Shopping Cart ID number. Where do I find that number?**
 - Before you enter the US Bank Payment site, you will be given a shopping cart ID number – write this number down or print the page for later reference. If you did not write the number down or print the page, you will need to wait two hours and start the renewal process over. Note: You may not be able to view your Shopping Card ID using Google Chrome. Please try again using Internet Explorer.
- **I am renewing online and am being asked for a pin number or extra digits in my license number. How do I find that information?**
 - You are in the Health and Business renewal part of the website, and you need to be in Trades renewal. You can find the appropriate renewal page by clicking [here](#).
- **Can I put my license in a “retired” status?**
 - No. There is no retired status for any Trades credentials. In order to keep your license current, you will need to complete the continuing education and renew it regularly. If you wish to trade in your Master Plumber license for a Journeyman Plumber license and pay the lesser fee, you can do this by choosing the appropriate method on the [Journeyman Plumber application](#). In order to apply by this method, your Master Plumber license must be current, and your continuing education must be completed.
- **I was born on or before January 1, 1956 and have 15 years of electrical construction experience. How can I apply for the “grandfathered” electrician license?**
 - You can find the application for the Registered Master Electrician registration on our website, or by clicking [here](#).
- **Why haven’t I received a renewal for my Refrigerant Handling Technician license?**
 - The Refrigerant Handling Technician license was eliminated May 4, 2012 by [2011 Wisconsin Act 146](#). The State of Wisconsin no longer issues a license for Refrigerant Handling Technicians, although a federal EPA (Environmental Protection Agency) card may be required.
- **Why haven’t I received a renewal for my Building Contractor Registration?**
 - The Building Contractor Registration was eliminated by [2013 Wisconsin Act 20](#) effective July 2, 2013. The State of Wisconsin requires general contractors to hold a Dwelling Contractor Certification and Dwelling Contractor Qualifier Certification if they are doing work on one- or two-family homes that require a building permit. If you are a general contractor and are *not* doing work on one- or two-family homes, or work that does not require a building permit, the state does not require you to hold a Dwelling Contractor or Dwelling Contractor Qualifier certification. However, you should contact the municipality (the city, village, or township) in which you are doing work to ensure that you are in compliance with any local requirements.

Contractor Specific Questions:

- **What type of license do I need to become a general contractor in Wisconsin?**
 - Pursuant to [WI Stat. 101.654\(1\)\(a\)](#), you are required to have the [Dwelling Contractor Certification](#) and [Dwelling Contractor Qualifier Certification](#) if you are doing general construction work, such as siding, insulation, and roofing, on one- or two-family homes that require you to pull building permits. The municipality in which you are doing work determines what type of work requires building permits.
- **How do I apply for the Dwelling Contractor Certifications?**
 - The Dwelling Contractor Certification is a business credential. To obtain this credential, submit your application along with the application fee of \$40.00 to the Department. You also need to include a certificate of liability insurance or a bond. Please see the [application](#) for complete details on applying.
 - The Dwelling Contractor Qualifier Certification is an individual credential. It must be held by at least one person employed by the company, or the owner or CEO. In order to obtain this credential, you must first complete an approved, 12-hour initial qualifier course, and submit proof of course completion along with the application and the application fee of \$45. See the [application](#) for complete details on applying.
- **Can I apply for the Dwelling Contractor Certifications online?**
 - No. You may either print the applications from the website and mail them in with the required documents, or apply in person at our Madison office.
- **I hold a general contractor license in another state. Can I transfer this license over to Wisconsin?**
 - No. Wisconsin currently does not have reciprocity with other states for trades licensing. In order to obtain the Dwelling Contractor credentials, you will need to apply using the methods indicated on the applications.
- **I am a commercial general contractor. What type of license do I need to work in Wisconsin?**
 - You are not required to hold a state-issued license for this type of work. You should contact the municipality in which you are performing work to determine if a license is required at the local level.
- **I am a subcontractor doing general construction work. What type of license am I required to have?**
 - You are not required to hold a state-issued license for this type of work. You should contact the municipality in which you are performing work to determine if a license is required at the local level.
- **What type of license do I need to do HVAC work in Wisconsin?**
 - Pursuant to [WI Stat. 101.178\(2\)](#), if you are doing installation or servicing of HVAC equipment, the state requires the [HVAC Contractor Registration](#). Some municipalities within the state have local exam requirements or may require the [HVAC Qualifier Certification](#). The HVAC Qualifier Certification requires taking and passing the state HVAC Qualifier exam. See the [application](#) for details on applying for the exam.